

CHRISTOPHER AND THE FAIRY.

A Tale of Circus Life.

Centerpole Tom professed to know everything about all the distinguished people of the "profession" in all parts of Christendom, and likely he did know a great deal; for, in his humble capacity, he had served many of them in divers countries, and, though a boastful man, he had never been detected in an inability to give trustworthy information. So, when it was announced, with a great show of large type, that "Christopher and the Fairy" had just landed at San Francisco from an Australian steamer, under contract for the remainder of the season, there was much excitement and curiosity among the people of the circus, and Centerpole Tom was at once exploited for knowledge concerning them.

"Hain't you ever heard of Christopher and the Fairy?" he asked, pityingly; "well, that gits me. The Fairy's the purtiest little trick on wheels, an' the way she kin do the flying trapeze is something 'stonishing. No, I hain't never seen her, but I know all about her. A fellow worked for me last season that seen her at Melbourne, and he told me a whole string of stuff about her. Every man-jack under the canvas went dead gone on her, but she never took no notice of any of 'em, and didn't seem to care for nobody's society but the women's and that ornery, measly old Christopher."

"Is Christopher her hushun?" asked a long-legged young groom.

"No!" thundered Tom, with so great vehemence that the young man quailed, and dared not ask any more questions.

"Brother?" inquired one of the ring-"supers."

"No!" yelled the veteran master of the centerpole-hoist; "he ain't her hushun, nor her hrother, nor her uncle, nor her grandfather, nor her cousin."

The head-hostler, as much a veteran as Centerpole Tom, and more modest and less theatrical than he, quietly said:

"No use making a fool of yourself and putting on airs before these hoys. I don't know who Christopher is, an' I ain't ashamed to say so. Now, who *is* Christopher?"

This was the supreme moment for which Centerpole Tom had waited. He squared himself around, and, looking steadily at the head-hostler, said impressively and with the utmost deliberation:

"Christopher is an elephant."

It was a small speech, but it was some time after this before the two men became good friends again.

There was a commotion all through the small army of circus people when Christopher and the Fairy arrived. They did not come to the tents for two or three days after landing, as it was rumored that Christopher had been seasick on the voyage across the Pacific and needed a little rest. When they did appear, however, they were cordially welcomed. The women of the circus found the Fairy (who, in private life, was known as Miss Camilla Armijo) to be a delightful girl, more substantial than a genuine fairy, to be sure, but hardly more so; for, although she was full-grown, she was so small and fragile that her professional name sat well upon her. There was a light touch of sadness in all her conduct, and Centerpole Tom explained this by saying that she had recently lost both her parents. How he discovered this, nobody ever could learn. But it was clear, at least, that she was a very sweet and gentle little body, very young, and with no friend in San Francisco except old Christopher.

I say "old Christopher" because it is impossible to associate anything but great age with his enormous proportions and overwhelming dignity. He was an East Indian elephant, of prodigious size. A more solemn and self-satisfied elephant it would have been impossible to find.

After the Fairy had been introduced to the people with whom she was to be associated the remainder of the season, and had chatted and quietly laughed with them a little, she turned to the menagerie man and said:

"Now we will show Christopher his quarters." And, by the dignified flapping of his great ears, Christopher seemed to add: "Yes; we are prepared now to see what you can do for old Christopher."

In fact, while they were about it, and all feeling a certain interest in the little stranger and her big companion, the whole company—the two clowns, the man who turned the double back-somersault, the strong man, the woman who wore a yellow wig when she rode bareback, the two men who did the great act on the horizontal bar, and some others, including Centerpole Tom and the surly head-man of the hostlers—went to see how Christopher was going to be disposed of. That was a simple affair: the great pachyderm was conducted to his allotted place in the menagerie tent, where an iron pin was driven into the ground and a chain, which was riveted to it, was locked around one of his legs. The pin and the chain were part of his belongings, and he was accustomed to be chained up thus and made no objection. Evidently he suffered no loss of dignity by this operation, for he appeared to say to himself, "This is perfectly proper, I am sure; for it is the rule of all circuses to keep the animals in some sort of confinement, and, although it accomplishes no useful purpose in my case, I believe in discipline and cheerfully submit to the rules."

It was very pretty to see how solicitous was the Fairy of her immense charge. She saw that he had a sufficient allowance of fresh, sweet hay, and from a bag which she carried, she fed him some dainties which she had for that purpose and which he took in his little trunk with manifest tokens of gratitude. She patted his great jaws and said kind things to him, and he took it all as a matter of course, seeming to say, "I see nothing at all strange in the affection and solicitude which this beautiful little Fairy lavishes upon me; for am I not a very large and majestic elephant, and does she not know that I love her better than does any one else in all the world?" And it was pretty to see how gently she made him good-bye until the evening performance, which would begin in two hours from that time.

There was a far greater crowd than usual at the performance that evening, for the flaming public announcements of

Christopher and the Fairy had borne profitable fruit. Not only were the seats packed all the way up to the eaves, but rows of extra seats had been provided on the level ground facing the ring. Several acts were done before the manager announced the new performers, which he did in the following graceful manner:

"Ladies and gentlemen: I now have the pleasure to introduce to you the most celebrated performers of her majesty's Australian colonies—Christopher and the Fairy. You will see for yourselves that Christopher is the largest and most powerful elephant in captivity, and that the Fairy justly deserves her reputation for being the most graceful and daring flying-trapeze performer in the world. The performances of these two renowned individuals will consist in ground acts in which they both take part, followed by the flying-trapeze act done by the Fairy alone, Christopher meanwhile standing below and looking on, at the same time giving signals to the Fairy and otherwise encouraging her in her daring and perilous performance high in the air."

When he had finished, the elephant came slowly walking out, and thereupon rose a mighty shout of applause and a great clapping of hands. Sitting on the massive shoulders of the enormous brute was the Fairy, glittering with spangles. She was so small, and fragile, and dainty, and Christopher was so overwhelming, and majestic, and stern, that the strange picture caught the audience with sweeping force, and the applause became deafening. Christopher calmly marched into the ring and proceeded deliberately around it, the Fairy meanwhile guiding him with gentle hand-pressure on one side of his neck or the other, while with the other hand she threw kisses to the audience. Her hare, dimpled arms and smiling, dimpled cheeks, her rosy mouth, her large black eyes, and curling black hair in which diamonds shone, won every heart for her in that immense crowd; for so much sweetness and grace and daintiness they had never seen all at once in a circus-ring before.

The circuit of the ring completed, the elephant stopped and listened gravely to the sorry jokes of the clown. He had heard them before and was not to be amused. The Fairy bounded to her feet on the great animal's back, and there found room for some entertaining tricks of agility. Then she gave him a tap with her slipped little foot, and, in response, he brought his long trunk around, caught her by the waist, and set her gently on the ground. This made the audience applaud until the Fairy was almost deaf. Other things, some old and some new, were done by the two, such as his walking over her, stepping ever so carefully, as she lay on the ground; recovering her handkerchief from the clown, who had stolen it and hidden it in his blouse; throwing her high in the air and stepping forward in time to have her alight nimbly on his back; and things like that. Then came her act on the flying-trapeze.

To prepare for this the clown fetched her a flag, which she gave to Christopher to hold in his trunk. Then the clown threw a tape over a trapeze hung high in the air, and, with a few parting caresses and whispered words to Christopher, she sprang to the tape and climbed it like a squirrel. She sat a moment on the trapeze-bar and then glanced down at Christopher, who, sitting back on his haunches the better to look so high, was gravely watching her. The band had stopped playing. A clear, musical voice from above, dropping like pearls on the people below, called out:

"How was that, Christopher?"

The elephant waved the flag and gravely nodded his approval.

Then came the real work of the act—all sorts of agile turnings and graceful leaps from the main bar to one hung higher still; and after every one of these feats, each more daring than its predecessor, she would call down in her musical, pearly voice:

"Was that all right, Christopher?"

And Christopher would wave the flag and solemnly nod his approval, as much as to say: "Of course it is all right; but we expect that from *you*, little Fairy!"

Finally came her greatest feat—it was to leap clear across the ring from one trapeze to another. She rested awhile before undertaking it, and Christopher, knowing what was coming, braced himself, all his massive muscles going on a tension, as though trying to give her strength and alertness for the dangerous task. The band played a spirited air while the girl sat still on the bar; then the music ceased, and a deep hush fell on the audience. The Fairy caught the bar in her hands and swung underneath it, and her clear voice rang out again:

"Keep a sharp eye, old Christopher!"

The elephant nodded and waved his flag, but with less stateliness than before. The Fairy began to swing backward and forward in the direction of the distant trapeze, which she was to catch after her flight through the air. Further and further did she swing, higher and higher, back and forth, her glittering spangles looking like a shower of meteors. A ringing voice cried out:

"Now we go, Christopher!" and she loosed her hold and went flying away across the tent, higher and higher, to the apex of a graceful parabolic curve, then down toward the trapeze, still so far away, while the people held their breath, and many closed their eyes. Down sailed the small and graceful figure, coming quickly closer to the goal; two eager hands were outstretched to seize the bar; one hand touched it and clutched it desperately, but the other missed its aim. The momentum sent her flying far beyond, but she still held the bar with one hand, and the ropes which held it creaked as the strain came upon them. A hold with one hand was not enough, and the Fairy had not time to bring the other to bear when the bar found the end of its tether. The small hand slipped, and the girl went flying toward the ground. A suppressed cry of horror rose from the audience as the frail, little body struck the ground at the entrance to the waiting-room, falling with a heavy, cruel sound that went into every heart in that vast assemblage and that made the strongest men shudder and groan and cover their faces.

She fell near the feet of Centerpole Tom, who was standing behind the musicians, and he was the first to approach her.

He straightened the body and looked in the blanched face and wide-staring eyes, and silently prayed for even a moan from the silent, white lips. The audience rose in an uproar, and thousands pressed forward to see the poor, limp body on the ground. But instantly there was a commotion from another cause: Christopher had seen the catastrophe, and he claimed the first right-of-way and the privileges of a friend. He came toward the packed mass of humanity with a roar that sent terror abroad, hundreds flying from his path. Others could not escape so easily, and of these, some he flung right and left with his trunk, and others were packed closer on either side by the interposition of his enormous bulk. Soon he reached the side of the Fairy, lying so white and still, and he dropped to his knees beside her and groaned and caressed her with his trunk.

Gentle hands were trying to find some life in the frail, crushed body when he came, but all fell back upon his terrible approach—all except Centerpole Tom, who feared not even the wrath of the giant Christopher. The elephant accepted his presence, seeing kindness in it. Centerpole's heart beat violently as he saw a faint movement of the chest, and he nearly choked with joy when he beheld the lips move and the eyes close and then open again. Some one brought water, with which he sprinkled her face. This did much good, for she gasped and then sighed.

"She is coming to!" cried Centerpole Tom.

And surely she was; for, with returning life, came evidence of suffering, and deep lines of pain formed about her mouth and eyes. Christopher noticed it, for he fanned her more vigorously with his great ears. Consciousness came slowly back; and, when it had returned, the first thing the Fairy saw was her old friend Christopher kneeling beside her.

"Poor, old Christopher!" she said, very faintly; and then, with great difficulty, she raised her hand and gently caressed his rough old face. "Poor Christopher! It will break your old heart to see me die. . . . You have loved me Christopher. . . . But they'll be good to you." Tears trickled down her cheeks, the hard lines deepened, the pool face became more pinched and drawn, the beautiful eyes wandered vacantly and then closed, and the Fairy passed into unconsciousness again.

A physician now came and knelt beside her, and, after he had examined her as well as he could, he said:

"She is desperately hurt, but she is young and is still alive. You must take her at once to a house, where I may care for her properly."

They gently picked her up, and, as they did so, a moan escaped her. This roused the elephant, already dazed by what had happened. He began clumsily rising to his feet watching them as they bore her away, and was evidently determined to follow. Seeing this, Centerpole Tom, who held the light body in his arms, hurried away, and almost ran to a small hotel not far distant. He took the Fairy within and laid her on a bed which they showed him in a rear room of the ground floor.

But Christopher had not lost sight of him, in spite of the crowd; and those without, seeing Christopher's intention of keeping close to his friend, and knowing it was impossible to stay him. They shouted to him and tried to drive him back, but he noticed them not at all. They threw boxes and chairs in his way, but he tossed them aside. A carriage which stood in his way, was crushed. Christopher seemed to think that, as his friend was among strangers, she was among enemies, and needed his protection. He would not give her up.

The situation was desperate. Men counseled shooting him, but how could a pistol-bullet find a vital spot in his enormous body? Besides, he was already maddened by the opposition he had encountered and further tormenting might lead to dire results. Before anything could be done, before any plan could be matured, he had reached the house. The door was closed and locked before him and furniture was piled behind it; but, with his massive head lowered, he went straight against it, and everything was crushed before his advance. Once in the house, he stopped and listened for the sound of her voice. He heard faint moans, and mistook the direction whence they came, for he started straight for the wide staircase leading to the upper floor. Up the stairs he began a laborious ascent the helpless crowd standing in motionless dismay. Up he toiled, roaring terribly at intervals. The wooden stair creaked and groaned under his tremendous weight. The plastering near them began to fall, timbers were sprung and wrenched from their fastenings, and the whole house quivered.

The catastrophe came at last. Just before Christopher reached the top, the whole staircase came down with a frightful crash, and the gigantic animal fell headlong to the floor which he crushed and splintered. A mighty groan escaped him, for the fall had done him desperate hurt. He struggled, and floundered in the mass of wrecked timbers, and finally after a supreme attempt, he staggered to his feet. With stupendous effort he steadied himself on his tottering legs and, dazed and shattered, began anew his search for the Fairy. But he did not have to go any further; Centerpole Tom, followed by the physician, came forward, bearing a small, dainty burden in his arms, which he laid gently on a table close to Christopher; and the tears which trickled down Centerpole's grizzly beard told anew the old, old story, as old as human suffering and sympathy.

"It will quiet him," explained Centerpole Tom to the few people who had ventured near, "and nothing can hurt her now."

Christopher eagerly regarded his companion, lying so white and quiet and beautiful, and then he caressed her cold face and hands. Perhaps he understood that it was all over with her, and that with her had gone all that the world held of brightness for him; and besides that his fall had grievously hurt him. He gazed at her and his head sank lower and lower. The fury had all left him, and, crushed both in spirit and body, he stood a towering, tottering wreck. Not a sound escaped him. His great body heaved painfully with his slow breathing, and swayed from side to side. A little later he

sank to his knees, and then he lay down, and with a groan he died.

On the western slope of Laurel Hill Cemetery, facing the grand Pacific and the glories of the setting sun, and standing watch over the Golden Gate, through which the great white ships sail to the kingdoms far over the seas, stands a granite monument, marking a very large grave and a small one; and it bears only this simple line:

"CHRISTOPHER AND THE FAIRY."

SAN FRANCISCO, August, 1891. W. C. MORROW.

HOCHE AND HOUDON.

"Parisina" writes of Two Interesting Events in Old Versailles.

Hoche, the victorious general who fought the enemies of the First Republic, and Houdon, the sculptor, have little in common beyond the initial letter of their names and their birthplace. Both were born at Versailles, and Versailles honored the memories of the two in a double festival a few days ago.

Dear, sleepy, old Versailles! I wonder how, in these go-ahead days, it has managed to keep its old characteristics. Save just near the station and on the road from the station to the palace—the annual resort of thousands of tourists—there is little to mark the passage of time. People who visit the city of the Grand Monarque seldom, if ever, stray out of this beaten track, and they know nothing of Versailles itself beyond the picture-galleries, and the gardens, and the inside of one or other of the many restaurants where they get their lunch or otherwise recruit after the fatigue of sight-seeing. They are generally pressed for time, too tired, or too indifferent to press investigation further. Perhaps the unevenly laid stones deter them, and I must confess that the Versailles stones are cruelly hard to the feet. Yet there are bits of old Versailles well worth a visit. There is the market built by Louis the Fourteenth, now let out to small shop-keepers, who generally deal in indiscriminate wares, from sugar-plums to old bones and bottles; quaint archways beneath old houses, through which you catch glimpses of paved courtyards, where the grass grows between the stones; the church of St. Louis should tempt the brush of the water-color artists, its domed roof and pinnacles showing deep gray against the blue sky; ancient mansions, such as that of the Dukes of Burgundy, fallen from their great estate and let out in flats and smelling eternally of cabbage-soup; the horse-pond, with its semicircular background of heavy masonry—a pond where fifty generations of animals have quenched their thirst; old streets full of mansions whose aristocratic windows look inward on cool, shady gardens and broad avenues of trees a couple of hundred years old, lined with ponderous barracks that have sheltered regiments of the ancient *régime*, not to mention King William's troops during the "Année Terrible."

The house where Hoche was born still stands in one of the narrow streets of the old quarter. For this occasion it is decked with trophies of flags, especially the second-floor windows, those of the apartment wherein the leader of the Republican armies against the Vendéens first saw the light. I see it as I walk past on my way to the Place d'Armes, where a grand review of the garrison is to be held in his honor. It is a lovely morning, and the scent of the limes is sweet and pleasant. A detachment of Cuirassiers is moving toward the place, their steel breast-plates glistening in the sun. When we arrive, we find the artillery already on the ground and two regiments of engineers—a noble phalanx; officers riding hither and thither, or making little groups à la Meissonier. It is a pretty sight; a prettier still when the word is given to present arms and the general in command, followed by a brilliant staff, gallops leisurely along the front of the lines, while the band in the distance plays "The Marseillaise." Soon they all commence filing off the place down the broad Avenue de Paris—first the infantry, then the artillery, and finally the cavalry. We must take a short cut and make the best of our way to the Place Hoche, where the civil authorities are snugly ensconced under a crimson-velvet canopy in front of the little square garden, in the midst of which is the statue of the general—the "young general," as he was called—who died, full of honors, at twenty-seven, and only knew the triumphs of the great "Épopée," and nothing of the reverses, nothing of Moscow, or of Waterloo. There is some speechifying, of course, and more of "The Marseillaise," and then the troops, which have come up from the other side, march past and present arms, and the first act of the Hoche celebration is over, and every one goes home to *déjeuner*.

On my way back to the house of the friends with whom I am staying, I meet the Catholic society of the town coming out of church, for it is still early, and the little groups of English—there is quite a British colony at Versailles—on the way to their devotions in the stuffy little Episcopalian chapel, built of iron, where you freeze in winter and are baked in summer. Hoche is not in favor with either of these divisions of the community. He is the Republican hero, and republicanism is rated "low" in the aristocratic society of the city, which is thoroughly monarchical; while your insular Protestant ignores heroes whose memory is kept green by annual rejoicings that take place on a Sunday. There is no difficulty in assigning a reason for the unpopularity of Hoche in the aristocratic circles of Versailles, since the majority of its inhabitants profess the opinions that were current here sixty years ago; it is not by any means so easy to say why it patronizes Houdon. Such is the case, however. The military and civil authorities of the place backed Hoche, the denizens of the Quartier St. Louis and the Boulevard de la Reine—represented chiefly by superannuated functionaries and dowagers—spurred for Houdon.

Yet Houdon's principal title to fame is the admirable statue of Voltaire, which all American visitors to Paris have studied with interest almost amounting to awe in the foyer of the Théâtre Français. It is true he was popularly supposed to have delineated the features of the lovely Dubarry in a statue

of Diana, and this may have rendered him interesting. The superannuated functionaries and the dowagers are most virtuous people, of course, and somewhat uncharitable, perhaps, too, over the failings of ordinary beings; but they are quite ready to condone the vices of kings. As a matter of fact, however, it was not the mistress of Louis the Fifteenth who posed for Houdon's Diana—though, I dare say, she might have done so, since Drouceils painted her with a very small amount of clothing, the little there was rather enhancing the piquancy of her beauty, and neither the king nor his paramour was at all shocked that Bouret, the farmer-general, when about to entertain royalty in his shooting-box in the forest of Sénart, should have the head of a famous Venus removed and replaced by one with the features of "La Dubarry." Be this as it may, Houdon was taken up by the opposition society of Versailles, and it was under its auspices that the subscription for the sculptor's statue—the unveiling of which was the event of this particular afternoon—was set on foot and finally carried to a satisfactory conclusion.

Perhaps you heard of the unique representation in the *bijou* theatre of Trianon, the proceeds of which went to defray the cost of the statue?—how, after being shut up for more than half a century, the boxes were once more filled with a gay crowd; how wax-candles were stuck into the sconces, and the old faded furniture and the still more faded scenery were made to do duty once again; how actors from the Français were engaged to play Sedaine's "Gageure Imprevue," others from the Opéra Comique to perform the parts in Jean Jacques Rousseau's operetta, "Le Devin de Village," and some of the opera ballet to dance a *pas* in the guise of gods and goddesses à la eighteenth century. The performances were a great deal talked about at the time, partly because all such revivals must be interesting, especially in a place so well adapted for the purpose, and partly because it led to a polite passage of arms between the organizers of the entertainment and the minister who had given the necessary permission to make use of the theatre—which is, of course, national property.

It is in a somewhat out-of-the-way quarter of Versailles that a site was chosen for Houdon's statue, at the further end of the Avenue Duplessis. Inauguration ceremonies are generally rather spiritless affairs, and had it not been for the pleasure of applauding Delaunay, the old favorite of the Parisian public, who consented to come forth from his retreat and recite some verses written for the occasion by Jules Claretie, the director of the Français, I should have regretted the drive in the broiling sun of a summer's afternoon, all the more that I was anxious not to miss the fountains. Ever since the days of the Grand Monarque, the Grandes Eaux have been the joy and pride of the Versailles, and whenever there is any festivity on hand they form part of the programme. Coming into the park out of the glare and heat of the streets, how cool look the shady avenues, the densely wooded shrubberies, the trim hedges of yew, and the broad sweep of the *tapis-vert*! You seem to step back a century. As you wander up one aisle of verdure, or thread the labyrinth of the Bosquet de la Reine or the Bosquet d'Apollon, or feast your eyes on the roses of the Jardin du Roi, you almost expect to meet courtly dames in powder and paniers, and the men and women in modern habiliments seem sadly out of place somehow. Your artistic eye may find fault with the florid taste of some of the groups—Apollo, surrounded by his satellites, in the grotto, even elicits a smile—but the whole effect is quaint and not unpleasant; and when, at the turn of an alley, you catch sight of one of the fountains playing beneath a dome of verdure, or coming out on the "green carpet," you look down toward the half-submerged chariot, with its prancing steeds sending forth jets of foam, or upward to the terrace, where the poor goddess, mocked by the populace—according to the legend—is revenged by their transformation into frogs, you are carried away by the beauty of the scene. And so on, from one sparkling, sunlit fountain to another, till you reach the huge, semicircular basin of Neptune, the waters of which are green by the reflection of the tall trees around, and, as you look, from every monster's mouth, from every side, start sheafs of bubbling water, shooting up into the air in feathery spray or describing curves infinitely varied, infinitely beautiful, in their studied grace.

No *fête* here is complete without a display of fireworks. And, later on, when night has settled down upon Versailles and when the alleys and *bosquets* are deserted, when the stone effigies of the two heroes of the day are mere gaunt shadows in the darkness, rockets and Roman candles, showers of green rain, fountains of light, whirling Catherine wheels, the green-and-crimson glow of Bengal fire illumine the great Place d'Armes, and, for the last time, appear—coupled together and writ in letters of flame—the names of Hoche and Houdon.

PARIS, July 6, 1891.

The latest fashion in Parisian society is to give "entertainments for young mothers," to which only young married couples are invited. The dance becomes of secondary consideration, and only square dances are tolerated. Instead of the customary favors in the cotillion, children's toys are distributed, which the young mothers take home. The following day the participants of such entertainments call with their children on a *visite de reconnaissance*.

A horrible accident happened at a private house in Paris. The host had invited a number of friends to luncheon. A great Danish boar-hound was in the room, according to custom. A guest happened to drop his napkin, and, while stooping to pick it up, the dog, with a spring, seized his throat and killed him. There was a terrible struggle to pull the beast off, but without avail.

Francis Wilson, the comic-opera singer, has built a handsome country-seat not far from New York city. In the third-story he has constructed a small theatre, with a stage large enough for fourteen actors, and audience-room for a hundred people.

IN TERROR OF DEATH.

A Mother's Awful Ordeal.

"You know," said Manuel, "what a sorrowful day for Tarragona was the twenty-eighth of June, 1811. But you can not imagine the horrors attending the taking of the city. You did not see five thousand Spaniards perish in ten hours; you did not see houses and churches in flames; you did not see unarmed old men and helpless women slaughtered in cold blood; you did not see the modesty of maidens, the dignity of matrons, the sanctity of nuns outraged. You did not see pillage and drunkenness mingling with lust and murder. You did not see, in short, one of the greatest exploits of the conqueror of the world, the hero of our age, the demi-god Napoleon!"

"I saw it all! I saw the sick rise from the bed of suffering, dragging after them their sheets, like shrouds, to perish at the hands of foreign soldiers on the threshold over which the day before had passed the Vatican! I saw lying in the street the body of a woman they had slaughtered, and at her side her infant still nursing at its dead mother's breast. I saw the husband, with hands tied together, witnessing the dishonor of the wife; children weeping with terror at the horrors that surrounded them; despair and innocence taking refuge in suicide; impiety insulting the dead."

"Dangerously wounded and unable to take further part in the conflict, I fled for refuge to Clara's house."

"Full of anguish and terror, she stood at the window fearing for my life and risking her own to see me in case I should chance to pass through the street."

"I entered and fastened the door, but my pursuers had already caught sight of Clara—and she was so beautiful!"

"They saluted her with a roar of savage joy and a burst of brutal laughter. A moment more and the door would yield to the axe and the flames. We were lost!"

"Clara's mother, carrying in her arms her year-old babe, led us to the cistern or reservoir of the house, which was very deep and which was now dry, as no rain had fallen for several months, and there we concealed ourselves. This cistern, the floor of which might measure some eight yards square, and which was entered by a steep underground flight of steps, narrowed, toward the top, like the mouth of a well, and opened into the centre of the court-yard, where a breast-work was built around it, above which two buckets were suspended from hooks attached to an iron bar for drawing water."

"The child I have spoken of, whose name was Miguel, was Clara's brother, that is to say, the youngest child of the unhappy woman whom the French had just made a widow."

"In the cistern we four might find safety. Seen from the yard, the cistern seemed a simple well. The French would think we had made our escape by the roof."

"They soon declared that such was the case, uttering horrible oaths while they rested themselves in the shady yard, in the center of which was the cistern."

"Yes, we were saved! Clara bound up my bleeding hand, her mother nursed Miguel, and I, although I was shivering from the chill which had followed the fever caused by my wound, smiled with happiness."

"At this moment, we noticed that the soldiers, wishing, doubtless, to slake their thirst, were trying to draw water from the cistern in which we were concealed."

"Picture to yourselves our anguish at that instant!"

"We drew aside to make way for the bucket, which descended until it touched the floor."

"We scarcely dared to breathe."

"The bucket was drawn up again."

"The well is dry!" cried the soldiers.

"There must be water upstairs!" exclaimed one.

"They are going away!" we all said to ourselves.

"What if they should be concealed in this well!" cried a voice in Catalan.

"It was a *renegade*!—a Spaniard who had betrayed us!"

"What nonsense!" responded the Frenchman; "they could not have got down there so suddenly!"

"That is true," responded the renegade.

"They did not know that the cistern could be entered by an underground passage, whose door or trap, carefully concealed in the floor of a dark cellar, somewhat distant from the house, it would be almost impossible to discover. We had, however, committed the imprudence of locking the iron grating which cut off the communication between the cistern and the passage, and we could not open it without making a great deal of noise."

"Imagine, then, the cruel fluctuations between hope and fear, with which we had listened to the dialogue carried on by those wretches on the very brink of the well. From the corners in which we were crouching, we could see the shadow of their heads, moving within the circle of light on the floor of the cistern. Every second seemed to us a century."

"At this moment the babe Miguel began to cry."

"But at his first whimper his mother silenced the sounds that threatened to betray our hiding-place, pressing the infant's tender face into her bosom."

"Did you hear that?" cried some one in the yard above.

"I heard nothing," responded another.

"Let us listen," said the renegade.

"Three horrible minutes passed."

"Miguel struggled to get his voice, and the more closely his mother pressed his face into her bosom, the more violent were his struggles."

"But not the slightest sound was audible."

"It must have been an echo!" exclaimed the soldiers.

"Yes, that was it!" assented the renegade.

"And they all took their departure, and we could hear the noise of their steps and the clanking of their sabres slowly dying away in the direction of the gate."

"The danger was passed!"

"But, alas! our deliverance had come too late."

"Baby Miguel neither cried nor struggled now."

"He was dead!"—Translated from the Spanish of P. de Alarcon by Mary J. Serrano.